

John Ismay (Oxford) and Dr. V. S. v. d. Goot (Amsterdam) for their most helpful comments on an earlier draft of the manuscript and for various items of information.

References

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Notes and Observations

MONMOUTHSHIRE MACROLEPIDOPTERA: SOME RECENT RECORDS. — The years 1978 and 1979 saw the appearance in Monmouthshire of several species of moths which were either new to the county or had only been recorded on a few occasions, while several butterflies were noted after an apparently prolonged absence.

Of particular interest to me was the unexpected appearance of *Mythimna pudorina* D. & S. on an inland bog at an altitude of 750 ft. in the east of the county. I knew this moth from the Suffolk reed-beds and for some years had searched for it in vain in the fen-like areas of Monmouthshire near the Severn Estuary where a few small reed-beds still survive and the low-lying pastures, drained by a network of "reens", are protected from high tides by the sea-wall. It was therefore with surprise that I noted its arrival in some numbers on the sheet whilst running a m.v. light on this acid upland bog on the 8th July 1978. I saw it there again the following year.

Several days later, on 11th July 1978, in a reed-bed near the Severn, another species previously unrecorded from Monmouthshire turned up. This time a single specimen of *Apamea oblonga* Haw. an insect which again I only knew previously from East Anglia.

On 29th August 1978, in a wood near Monmouth, I saw my first Monmouthshire specimen of *Cyclophora albipunctata* Hufn. I believe there is only one previous record for this moth, that of Nesbitt in 1892 from Llandogo, a few miles further down the Wye Valley. On 27th May 1979 the same wood provided a single example of *Eupithecia irriguata* Hb. Although it has been recorded from the neighbouring counties of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, and Glamorgan I believe it is new to the Monmouthshire list.

During 1979 my garden m.v. trap at Usk produced several interesting species. In the spring there were single specimens of *Orthosia populeti* Fabr. on 21st and 28th April and two worn specimens on 15th May. This moth, as far as I am aware, had been recorded only once before, Bird having found larvae on poplar in the Wye Valley in 1907. A single example of *Lithophane semibrunnea* Haw. appeared on 15th May. Unlike *Lithophane socia* Hufn. which occurs here most years, *L. semibrunnea* has, I believe, only been recorded twice pre-

viously from Monmouthshire. It was first noted by Bird from the Tintern district in 1905 and my friend Lt.-Col. R. B. Humphreys of Durham secured one at m.v. light in Usk on 28th October 1969.

In July two specimens of *Leucoma salicis* Linn. turned up at Usk. This moth is well-established at Magor Marsh, a small fen in the south of the county and now a Nature Reserve owned by the Gwent Trust for Nature Conservation. This has been its only known station in the southern half of Wales and I have seen it there in varying numbers most years since finding it for the first time on 6th July 1971. However, a male of the species was attracted to an electric light in the yard of Usk Prison, now a Detention Centre, on 3rd July 1979, and another came to my m.v. trap two days later. It is of interest to note that Magor Reserve is also the only locality to the west of Offa's Dyke for the Water Ermine (*Spilosoma urticae* Esp.) which I first encountered there on 11th July 1969.

In the autumn two more species new to Monmouthshire appeared in my garden m.v. trap, *Hoplodrina ambigua* D. & S. on 3rd October 1979, and *Lithophane leautieri* Boisd. on 10th October.

Turning to butterflies, the most noteworthy record was the sighting in the Monmouth district of a single Clouded Yellow (*Colias croceus* Geoffr.) on the early date of 16th June 1979. It was flying rapidly and steadily in a northerly direction in the afternoon sunshine. Since the great Clouded Yellow invasion of 1947 it has rarely been noted in Monmouthshire and this is the earliest date on which I can recall seeing this migrant.

Our one well-established and strong colony of the White Admiral (*Ladoga camilla* Linn.) in the north-east of the county continued to thrive during the last two years which also saw, in the same woods, a resurgence of the Dark Green Fritillary (*Argynnis aglaja* Linn.) which has been notably absent from Gwent for a considerable period. There were several reports of sightings of this species during the hot summer of 1976 but I myself had not seen it since about 1962 when it disappeared from a favoured haunt in the Tintern area where it flew in company with the Silver-washed Fritillary (*Argynnis paphia* Linn.) and the High Brown Fritillary (*Argynnis adippe* D. & S.). The latter also disappeared from that locality about 1966 and has not been reported in the county since.

Finally, on 8th July 1979 near Monmouth I saw a solitary belated Green Hairstreak (*Callophrys rubi* Linn.) another species which of late has become scarce in Monmouthshire. Though it formerly occurred in several localities including the Usk and Tintern districts this is the first one I have seen for twelve years. — Dr. G. A. NEIL HORTON, Plas Newydd, Usk, Gwent.

EPPING FOREST. — I cannot agree with Mr. Wykes that Epping Forest is more or less an entomological desert (1979, *Ent. Rec.*, 91: 225). It may not be particularly rich in butterflies, but I would remind Mr. Wykes that it was an Epping